

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Last updated: September 2023

**Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy**

All children and young people will have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity. We are committed to anti-discriminatory practice and recognise the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled children and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

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| Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy of  Tor School |

This policy will be reviewed in full by the Management Committee annually.

The policy was last reviewed and agreed by the Management Committee September 2023.

It is due for review September 2024

Signature  Date …1st November 2023

Head Teacher

Signature ………………….………………. Date ….…………………

Chair of Management Committee



Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy of

Tor School

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| **Updated September 2023 reflecting:**   * Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) * Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2018, Updated 1 July 2022) * Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and procedures * Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges (March 2023) | |
| **Date ratified by the Management Committee** | **1st November 2023** |
| **Review Cycle** | **Annual or when there is a change in statutory guidance or legislation** |
| **Review Date** | **September 2024** |

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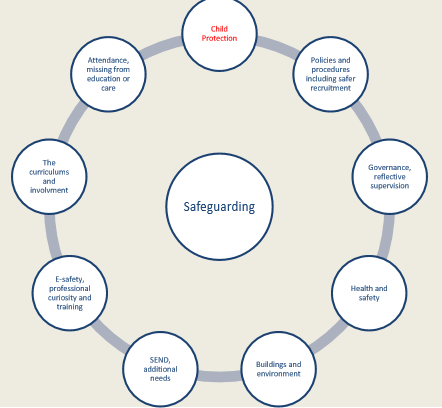
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# Introduction

At Tor School, we are committed to providing an environment that nurtures and transforms the lives of children and young people attending Tor School and take seriously our responsibilities to safeguard and promote their welfare. In addition, we undertake our responsibilities to work in partnership with agencies as part of the wider, multi-agency, safeguarding system, always acting in the best interest of the child or young person where concerns are identified, in accordance with the Tor School Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and Procedures, statutory guidance and Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership policies and procedures.

Personal sensitive information is processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and Part 3, the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Consent to share information will be sought unless we are required to share information where there are child protection concerns (and consent has been withheld) or we are requested to share information with other statutory agencies such as the police or children’s social care in pursuit of their enquiries in order protect and safeguard children and young people.



# Definition of safeguarding

“Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is defined in statutory guidance as: protecting children from maltreatment; preventing impairment of children’s mental and physical health or development; ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.”

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is everyone’s responsibility.**

To fulfil this responsibility effectively we ensure our approach is child-centred and always places the safety, welfare and needs of the child or young person first. **We adopt the approach ‘it could happen here’.**

Most children grow up in loving families and supportive communities and become independent, resilient adults. Wherever possible we want this for all children and young people in Somerset, so that they and their families can support themselves by engaging with and contributing to their local communities.

In order to achieve this children, young people and their families should receive the right intervention as early as possible to tackle problems and prevent issues escalating. All practitioners will adopt an Early Help/Think Family approach meaning they look at the whole family situation and what needs to happen to improve that situation whether that means working with adults, children or the whole family

# Our commitment

To safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people through:

* The provision of a safe environment in which children and young people can learn
* Identifying concerns early and provide appropriate help and support for children and young people and their parents/carers to prevent concerns escalating to a point whereby intervention would be required under the Children Act 1989 and in accordance with the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership Effective Support for Children and Families.

# Glossary

* References to “staff” related to any staff-member, paid or unpaid, who contribute to the care, transportation or education or our children and young people.
* For the purposes of brevity, Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership is referred to as SSCP.

# Statutory responsibilities

All action taken by Tor School will be in accordance with the following current legislation:

* The Children Act 1989 and 2004 (revised)
* Education Act 2002 and 2011 (revised)
* Education and Inspections Act 2006

It will also be in accordance with the following statutory advice and guidance:

* *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018, updated July 2022, 2023 version, at time of writing, out for consultation)* sets out the multi-agency working arrangements to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children and young people.
* *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)* sets out what schools should do and sets out the legal duties with which school must comply with in order to keep children and young people safe
* *Teacher Standards 2011 (updated December 2021)* sets out that teachers, including Headteachers, should safeguard children’s well-being and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties
* Other specific guidance and advice issued by the Department for Education (DfE) in relation to the wider safeguarding agency, e.g. COVID-19 , behaviour, health and safety, bullying, e-safety and medical needs
* Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges (March 2023)

# The role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) is a statutory guidance document that requires every school and college to have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) who has the status and authority within the senior leadership team to carry out the duties of the post including committing resources and, where appropriate, supporting and directing staff.

The provided advice and support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, take part in strategy discussions, inter-agency meeting (or support other staff to do so) and to contribute to the assessment of children and young people.

The DSL also takes lead responsibility for online safety and understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place. They are the designated Online Safety Lead.

The DSL should be given time and the resources they need to carry out the role effectively

## The role of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)

The DDSL supports the DSL in discharging their responsibilities and whilst they may deputise for the DSL the lead responsibility for child protection remains with the DSL.

Details of Tor School key safeguarding personnel can be found at Appendix D.

Both the DSL and DDSL must complete single agency and multi-agency training to undertake the role which is provided by the Local Authority Education Safeguarding Service and SSCP. In addition, they will access DSL briefings, attend annual refresher training and remain up to date in relation to early help, safeguarding and child protection.

The role of the Management Committee

The Management Committeewill ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They will also have regard to this guidance to ensure that the policies, procedures and training in the provision are effective and comply with the law at all times.

The responsibilities placed on the Management Committee include:

* Contributing to ensure the provision is carrying out inter-agency working, which includes providing a coordinated offer of early help when additional needs of children are identified.
* Ensuring that an effective child protection policy is in place, together with a staff behaviour code of conduct policy and behaviour policy.
* Ensuring staff are provided with Part One and Annexe A of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023)* – and are aware of specific safeguarding issues.
* Ensuring that staff induction is in place with regards to child protection and safeguarding.
* Appointing an appropriate senior member of staff to act as the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
* Ensuring that all of the Designated Safeguarding Leads (including deputies) undergo formal Somerset child protection training every two years (in line with SSCP guidance) and receive regular (annual) safeguarding refreshers (for example via e-bulletins, meeting other DSLs, or taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments).
* Prioritising the welfare of children and young people and creating a culture where staff and volunteers are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.
* Ensuring that children are taught about safeguarding in an age appropriate way.
* Having strategic responsibility for filtering and monitoring and ensure standards are being met, to safeguard children from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material. Assign a member of the Management Committee to oversee this.
* Having a senior lead to take leadership responsibility for the organisation’s safeguarding arrangements.
* Ensure scrutiny and effectiveness of the single central record and child protection recording is undertaken.
* Ensure safeguarding is regularly discussed and outcomes recorded at Governor meetings.
* Ensure the requirements of The Governor’s Safeguarding Audit Section 175 are met and actions when needed completed in a timely way

# What all staff should know

All schools and colleges are required to issue, in full, Part One and Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022) to their staff and ensure that they have read and understood its contents. At Tor School we are adopting this guidance and its contents across the whole organisation and whilst the language refers to “school” or “headteacher” it applies to both care and education provision provided at Tor School. School should be interpreted to be “Tor School” and “headteacher” should be interpreted as “principal”

# Staff Induction

As part of the induction process for new employees they will attend an induction briefing or if they commence part way through the year receive a one to one induction meeting with either the DSL or DDSL that signposts staff to relevant safeguarding documentation including this policy and procedure, guidance for safer working practice, what to do if you’re worried a child may be abused and whistleblowing advice see Appendix A: Staff Induction Record.

# Action to be taken if there are concerns in relation to safeguarding practices at Tor School

All staff, volunteers and agency staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and any potential failures in the safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team and designated safeguarding leads. Should staff feel unable to raise concerns within the organisation advice and guidance has been produced to ensure that they are aware of how to raise such concerns externally see Appendix B: NSPCC Whistleblowing advice and information. In addition, the Tor School whistleblowing policy is available via the website/internal intranet [<https://www.torschool.org/policies/>

The Tor School concerns flowchart provides additional information about how to make a referral to Children's Social Care, the LADO or to report concerns to the NSPCC advice line in instances where they have concerns about the organisation’s response to child protection, the conduct of staff or they do not feel that appropriate action has been taken in relation to concerns they have raised. This is available in Appendix C of this document.

# Abuse and neglect (definitions)

**All staff should be aware that abuse, neglect and safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases, multiple issues will overlap with one another.**

Abuse isthe maltreatment of a child or young person; they may be abused or neglected through harm being inflicted or by parents or carers failing to prevent harm.

Children and young people may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them. They may also experience abuse online by people they may or may not know. Perpetrators of abuse may be adults or children and may operate alone or in groups.

The following are the statutory definitions of abuse and neglect as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018, updated 2022). The ultimate responsibility to assess and determine the type of abuse lies with the Police and Children's Social Care.

**Our responsibilities are:**

* **to understand what each category of abuse is**
* **to understand how this abuse can impact on the welfare and development of our children**
* **to take appropriate action when we have concerns that a child or young person might be at risk of or already experiencing abuse or neglect**

Physical abuse

A form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

Statutory guidance Safeguarding Children in whom Illness is Fabricated or Induced (2008) sets out a national framework within which agencies and professionals at local level – individually and jointly – draw up and agree upon their own more detailed ways of working together where illness may be being fabricated or induced in a child by a carer who has parenting responsibilities for them.

Neglect

The persistent failure to meet a child’s basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child’s health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to: provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment); protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger; ensure adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate care-givers); ensure access to appropriate medical care or treatment. It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child’s basic emotional needs.

Emotional abuse

The persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child’s emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person.

It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or ‘making fun’ of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child’s developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning, or preventing the child participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

Sexual abuse

Involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving a high level of violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening.

The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for.

Sexual abuse can take place online and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not sole perpetrated by adult males. Woman can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children.

# Safeguarding in specific circumstances

In addition to the above there are other areas of safeguarding that the organisation has to have due regard to.

Annex A of *Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023)* highlights specific forms of abuse and safeguarding issues which staff who work with children and young people should read the following is a synopsis of the areas addressed but are not a fully replica of the guidance.

Children and the court system **may be required to give evidence in the criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed.**

There are a range of guides to support child witnesses. In the civil courts children and young people may be involved in child arrangement hearing and the Ministry of Justice has launched an online child arrangement information tool detaining the dispute resolution service.

**Children Absent from Education and Children Missing Education (CME)**

Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It requires early intervention via school attendance processes, with reference to ‘Working together to improve school attendance’ (2022, updated 2023) and liaison with the Education Engagement Service. The Education Family Support Worker will lead on this process.

All staff should be alert to children going missing as this can be a vital warning sign of a range of safeguarding risks, including abuse and neglect, sexual abuse or exploitation (Child Sexual Exploitation and Criminal), travel to conflict zones, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage. Early intervention is necessary to protect and safeguard a child or young person.

Tor school follows Somerset Education Engagement Service [CME Schools Process Map](https://www.supportservicesforeducation.co.uk/Page/11630) .

Children with family members in prison

These children are more likely to have poor outcomes, including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. More information to support schools and colleges can be found on the [Nicco](https://www.nicco.org.uk/) website <https://www.nicco.org.uk/>

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE is child sexual abuse, whereby an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child or young person under 18 to engage in sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. It can be a one-of occurrence or happen over time.

Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to

coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into any criminal activity:

* in exchange for something the victim needs or wants
* for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator
* through violence or the threat of violence

**County lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved

in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing

areas [within the UK], using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of “deal line”.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and

vulnerable adults exploited to move [and store] drugs and money. Offenders will often

use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to ensure

compliance of victims.

Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children’s homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations and are known to be exposed to techniques such as ‘plugging’, where drugs are concealed internally to avoid detection. Children can easily become trapped by this type of exploitation as county lines gangs create drug debts and can threaten serious violence and kidnap towards victims (and their families) if they attempt to leave the county lines network.

One of the ways of identifying potential involvement in county lines are missing episodes (both from home and school), when the victim may have been trafficked for the purpose of transporting drugs and a referral to the [National Referral Mechanism](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms/guidance-on-the-national-referral-mechanism-for-potential-adult-victims-of-modern-slavery-england-and-wales) should be considered. If a child is suspected to be at risk of or involved in county lines, a safeguarding referral should be considered alongside consideration of availability of local services/third sector providers who offer support to victims of county lines exploitation.

Further information on the signs of a child’s involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the Home Office.

**Intelligence about risks to vulnerable young people should be reported to Avon and Somerset police via their online form:** [**https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul**](https://www.avonandsomerset.police.uk/forms/vul) **. Any crimes or threats of harm should be reported as normal, via 101 or 999.**

Child and Adolescent Mental Health

Good mental health and resilience are fundamental to our physical health, our relationships, our education and to achieving our potential. Please refer to the DfE advice, [*Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (2018*](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2)*)*.

This is non-statutory advice which clarifies the responsibility of the school, outlines what they can do and how to support a child or young person whose behaviour - whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise - may be related to an unmet mental health need. While it considers the school environment it is also relevant for work within our residential provision.

Tor School’s Mental Health Lead is Emma Hill.

Domestic, gender-based and teenage relationship abuse and violence against women

These categories of abuse are defined as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners irrespective of gender or sexuality. Violence and abuse can occur in relationships between children and young people at any age. Teenage relationship abuse is when there is actual or threatened abuse within a romantic relationship or a previous relationship.

Be aware that:

• Children who witness domestic abuse are also victims

• Witnessing domestic abuse can have a lasting impact on a child

• Children can be victims, and perpetrators, in their own relationships too

• Domestic abuse can be physical, sexual, financial, psychological or emotional

Further advice and guidance accessed through:

* NSPCC
* Refuge
* [Safelives](http://www.safelives.org.uk/knowledge-hub/spotlights/spotlight-3-young-people-and-domestic-abuse)
* Spotlight on Young People
* The Domestic Abuse National Helpline
* [Childline](https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/friends-relationships-sex/sex-relationships/healthy-unhealthy-relationships/)
* [The Children’s’ Society](https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/information/young-people/advice/teenage-relationship-abuse)

Homelessness

Homelessness or the being at risk of being made homeless is a significant risk for children or young people. The DSL should refer the matter to Children’s Services as soon as possible.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils to provide meaningful help, including an assessment of need and circumstances.

The DfE and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and local government have published joint statutory guidance on the provision of accommodation for 16 and 17-year-olds who may be homeless or require accommodation.

Online Safety

Annex C of Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) addresses the use of technology which can be a significant component of many safeguarding issues including CSE, CCE, radicalisation, sexual predation etc., whereby technology provides the platform that facilitates harm.

Schools and colleges must adopt a range of effective safeguarding approaches that both safeguards and empowers children and young people to access support and remain safe online by reducing the risk of harm through the use of filters, monitoring and appropriate use policies for those accessing our IT system, whilst at the same time providing a safe environment in which children and young people can learn to keep themselves safe online.

The DSL, as Online Safety Lead, has oversight of filtering and monitoring, as detailed in the Online Safety Policy.

Training on online safety is part of the whole school approach to safeguarding.

**Sharing nude and semi-nude images**

**This is a form of sexual harassment.**

Any incidents shall be dealt with reference to [*Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people*](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1008443/UKCIS_sharing_nudes_and_semi_nudes_advice_for_education_settings__Web_accessible_.pdf), (2020).

Advice can also be sought via the Professionals Online Safety Helpline 0344 381 4772 [helpline@saferinternet.org.uk](mailto:helpline@saferinternet.org.uk) .

When deciding whether to involve the police and or children’s social care, or if incidents can be dealt with within school, consideration will be given to the following when assessing risk:

* Are there concerns about the young person’s vulnerability?
* Why were the images shared? Was the young person put under pressure or coerced or was consent freely given?
* Have the nudes and semi-nudes been shared beyond its intended recipient?
* Was it shared without the consent of the young person who produced the
* images?
* Have the nude and semi-nudes been shared on social media or anywhere else online?
* How old is the young person or young people involved?
* Does the young person understand the possible implications of sharing the nudes and semi-nudes?
* Are there additional concerns if the parents or carers are informed?

Child on Child Abuse

At Tor school there is a zero-tolerance approach to child on child abuse – it must always be challenged and reported as a safeguarding issue.

Students will be made aware of the seriousness of child on child abuse through PSHE lessons, assemblies and staff using consistent language and referring to child on child abuse when challenging behaviour.

Child on child abuse is reported via Schoolpod as a safeguarding concern, however serious cases must be reported immediately to a member of SLT or the DSL. The DSL will analyse any patterns of child on child abuse each half-term to ensure any emerging issues can be addressed.

Even if there are no reported cases of child on child abuse, this doesn’t mean it’s not happening within the school and staff must be alert to it happening.

A child on child abuse toolkit can be found here:

<https://www.farrer.co.uk/globalassets/clients-and-sectors/safeguarding/farrer--co-safeguarding-peer-on-peer-abuse-toolkit-2019.pdf>

Staff should recognise that downplaying certain behaviours as “just banter” or “boys being boys” can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviour, an unsafe environment for children and young people and a culture that normalises abuse.

Child on child abuse can take many forms, including bullying (including cyber bullying); sexual violence; harassment; physical abuse and violence (e.g. hitting, kicking, shaking, biting); sexting and initiating/hazing-type\* violence or rituals.

\* Hazing or initiation ceremonies refers to the practice of rituals, challenges and other activities involving harassment. Hazing is seen in many different types of social groups, including gangs, sports teams and school groups.

**Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Between Children**

**Sexual violence** includes rape, assault by penetration, sexual assault and causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent.

**Sexual harassment is any unwanted conduct of a sexual nature.** It can occur inside and outside of school, or online. It includes sexual comments, sexual taunting and physical behaviour such as deliberately brushing against someone.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges can occur between two children of any age irrespective of their gender or sexual identity. It can occur through a group of children or young people sexually assaulting or harassing an individual or group of children**.**

**There is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual violence and sexual harassment. It must be reported immediately to the DSL/DDSL.**

Children may not find it easy to talk about abuse verbally and staff should be aware of signs and behaviours that might indicate abuse.

Guidance is found within Part 5 of Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023 and the [Somerset Harmful Sexual Behaviour Protocol](https://www.supportservicesforeducation.co.uk/Page/11630) .

**Up-skirting**

Up-skirting involves taking a picture under a person’s clothing without them knowing, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. This is now a criminal offence and incidents must be reported to the Police in the first instance.

Preventing extremism

Children and young people can be vulnerable to extremist ideology and radicalisation and forms part of schools and colleges safeguarding responsibilities, as set out in the Prevent Duty. Extremism is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values and radicalisation refers to the process by which a person come to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups. Further information can be access below in relation to:

* *[The revised Prevent Duty (Updated 1 April 2021)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales)*
* *[Channel and Prevent Multi-Agency Panel (PMAP) guidance (February 2021)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/channel-and-prevent-multi-agency-panel-pmap-guidance)*
* *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2022)* – page 148
* [Educate against hate website](https://educateagainsthate.com/)

**Serious Violence**

Risk factors that might increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence include:

• being male

• having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school

• having experienced child maltreatment

• having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery.

Tor school works with the Safer Somerset Partnership Violence Reduction Unit <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/libraries-leisure-and-communities/safer-somerset-partnership-violence-reduction-unit/>

Private Fostering

Private fostering is when a child under the age of 16 (under 18 if they have a disability) is cared for by someone who is not their parent or a 'close relative'. This is a private arrangement made between a parent and carer, for 28 or more consecutive days.

Close relatives are defined as step-parents, grandparents, brothers, sisters, uncles or aunts (whether of full blood, half blood or marriage/affinity).

A private foster carer may be a friend of the family, the parent of a friend of the child, or someone previously unknown to the child’s family who is willing to privately foster a child. Tor School has a responsibility to refer to Children's Social Care of any private fostering arrangement we become aware of, in order for Children's Social Care to undertake an assessment to ensure the needs and welfare of the child or young person is being met and that adults caring for them have access to advice and support.

**Special Education Needs and disabilities**

There is a concern sometimes that, for children with SEN and disabilities, that their SEN or disability needs are seen first, and the potential for abuse second. If children are behaving in particular ways or they’re looking distressed or their behaviour or presentation is different from in the past, our staff should think about that being a sign of the potential for abuse, and not simply see it as part of their disability or their special educational needs.

**Children who are lesbian, gay, bi trans or questioning (LGBTQ+)**

Pupils who are LGBTQ+ may be at greater risk of harm. Being LGBTQ+ in itself doesn’t put them at greater risk, but they may be targeted by their peers, or might not have a trusted adult they can talk to. Staff need to be alert to this and create safe spaces for pupils to speak out and share concerns.

**Children Looked After**

The staff are aware of Children Looked After (CLA) and Previously Looked After Children (PLAC). The Designated Teacher for CLA will have information about a child’s looked after legal status and care arrangements, including the level of authority delegated to the carer by the authority looking after the child. They have details of the child’s social worker and the name and contact details of the local authority’s virtual head for children in care.

Honour-Based Abuse

Including: Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and Breast Ironing

Honour-based abuse relates to incidents or crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. All forms of honour-based violence (HBV) is abuse, regardless of the motivation and should be handled and escalated as such.

Since February 2023 it is now a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose it is to cause a child to marry before they are 18, even if violence, threats or coercion are not used.

**There are specific mandatory reporting duties for teachers and support staff to report to the Police where they discover (either through disclosure or visual evidence) that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18.**

**Additional guidance and publications**

* FGM: Mandatory reporting procedural information can be accessed [here](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/573782/FGM_Mandatory_Reporting_-_procedural_information_nov16_FINAL.pdf)
* FGM Fact sheet can be access [here](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/496415/6_1639_HO_SP_FGM_mandatory_reporting_Fact_sheet_Web.pdf)
* Forced Marriages: Multi- agency statutory guidance (July 2022) can be accessed [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-right-to-choose-government-guidance-on-forced-marriage/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-for-dealing-with-forced-marriage-and-multi-agency-practice-guidelines-handling-cases-of-forced-marriage-accessible).

# Allegations of Abuse Made Against Teachers, including supply teachers, other staff, volunteers and contractors.

Working Together to safeguard Children (March 2018, updated 2022) states that organisations should have in place clear policies in line with those from the SSCP to manage allegations against people who work with children and young people. Such policies should make a clear distinction between an allegation, a concern about the quality of care or practice or a complaint. Full details are available [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2)

In addition, Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) Part Four, sets how allegations may indicate that a person would pose a risk of harm if they continue to work in regular or close contact with children in their present position, or in any capacity in a school or college under the age of 18 years. Part 4 of the Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023) which can be accessed [here](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2)

There are two levels of allegation/concern:

1. Allegations that may meet the harms threshold
2. Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – ‘low level concerns’.

**Allegations that may meet the harms threshold**

An allegation may relate to a person who works with children who has:

* behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
* possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
* behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
* behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The Tor School Management of Allegations Policy and procedure is available on the school website.

Phone Somerset Direct on **0300 123 2224** for a referral to the LADO.

## What staff should do if they have concerns about another staff member

If any member of staff, volunteer or agency staff have concerns relating to an individual’s conduct or behaviour, whether they be a colleague, member of the management or senior leadership team, and they are likely to meet the harms threshold, they should refer their concerns to the Headteacher immediately.

Where concerns or allegations relate to the Headteacher, these should be referred to the chair of the Management Committee. Where further action or discussion is needed the LADO must be contacted.

**Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – ‘low level concerns’**

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult has acted in a way that:

• is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct

outside of work

• does not meet the allegations threshold or is not considered serious enough to

refer to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

Examples of low-level concerns could include:

• being over friendly with children

• having favourites

• engaging with a child one-to-one in a secluded area

• using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating or offensive language.

Low-level concerns about a member of staff should be referred to the headteacher, or

in the case of the headteacher, to chair of the management committee in writing by completing and emailing a Low Level Concern Form (see Appendix D) within 24 hours of being made aware of the concern. Records will include the details of the concern, how the concern arose, the actions taken and the name of the person sharing their concerns.

**Staff Code of Conduct**

In addition to the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, we have a staff Code of Conduct that outlines an acceptable level of staff behaviour. During their induction training, new staff will be given and have read:

* Staff Code of Conduct (including use of social media, and the Position of Trust Offence)
* The school’s Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
* Keeping Children Safe in Education (2023) (Part One and Annex A)
* The school’s Behaviour Policy
* Procedures for children missing education
* Information on prioritising the welfare of children and young people and creating a culture where staff and volunteers are confident to challenge senior leaders over any safeguarding concerns.

# Record Keeping

All concerns, discussions and decisions made and the reasons for those decisions should be recorded in writing. If in doubt about recording requirements staff should discuss with the DSL.

When a child has made a disclosure, the member of staff/volunteer should:

* Record as soon as possible after the conversation on MyConcern
* Do not destroy any original notes in case they are needed by a court. Scan these and attach to MyConcern log
* Record the date, time, witness, place and any noticeable non-verbal behaviour and the words used by the child
* Indicate the position of any injuries
* Record statements and observations rather than interpretations or assumptions
* Agree and record actions and outcomes

All records need to be sent to the Designated Safeguarding Lead promptly. No copies should be retained by the member of staff or volunteer.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead will ensure that all safeguarding records are managed in accordance with the Education (Pupil Information) (England) Regulations 2005.

Child protection records should include:

* a clear and comprehensive summary of the concern
* details of how the concern was followed up and resolved
* a note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

If a pupil who is/or has been the subject of a child protection plan changes provision, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will inform the social worker responsible for the case and transfer the appropriate records to the Designated Safeguarding Lead at the receiving provision in a secure manner, and separate from the child’s academic file.

All child protection recordings should be scrutinised regularly to ensure the action and outcome has been carried and any drift avoided. All records are kept in accordance with SSE Record keeping guidance available on the Support Services for Education website under the Education Safeguarding section policy and guidance. Further guidance is available here <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/media/1442/child-protection-records-retention-and-storage-guidelines.pdf>

**Local Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements**

* Safeguarding in Somerset is overseen by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership <https://sscb.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/> , comprised of Somerset County Council, Avon and Somerset Constabulary and Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group.
* Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures online can be found here <https://www.proceduresonline.com/swcpp/somerset/index.html> .
* Effective Support for Children and Families in Somerset Guidance, including information on Early Help procedures and support for students with SEND, can be found here

<https://somersetsafeguardingchildren.org.uk/publication/effective-support-for-children-and-families-in-somerset/>

**Use of school premises for non-school/college activities**

If services or activities are provided by the school, under direct supervision from staff, Tor school arrangements for child protection will apply. If another organisation is providing services or activities on the site, the governing body will ensure that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are in place.

Tor school will remain responsible for reporting concerns about visiting staff that meet the harms threshold to the LADO.

**Alternative Provision**

Any providers of Alternative Provision used by Tor school will be checked to have effective safeguarding arrangements in place – this is recorded on an [alternative provision checklist](https://somersetcc.sharepoint.com/:w:/s/SCCPublic/EUinlZaIoDhAhaSRD603HpcBSM16ZwY8T0ySURVCRNZvWg?e=LyqsRo). Each provider will have at least one QA visit per term. Somerset guidance on alternative provision providers can be found here:

<https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities-send/alternative-provision-directory/>

# Appendix A



**Employees**

**Safeguarding Induction**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Staff Member:**  **Name and Role:** |  |
| **Date of Commencement:** |  |
| **Inductor:**  **Name and Role** |  |
| **Date of Induction:** |  |
| **Signed by Inductee:** |  |
| **Signed by Inductor:** |  |

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# Agenda

Welcome to Tor School

Outline of the induction meeting

* + Tor School Vision and Ethos
  + What is Safeguarding (Child Protection)
  + What safeguarding means for children or young people at Tor School
  + Voice and influence
  + Action to be taken if you have a concern

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# Tor School Vision and Ethos

# What is Safeguarding (Child Protection)

Safeguarding is an overarching term used to ensure that the welfare of children and young people is paramount, and they are protected from abuse and neglect. **We all have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.**  This means protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect; preventing impairment of health or development; ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care and taking action to enable all children and young people to have the best life chances.

Every member of staff, irrespective of their role in the organisation, has a responsibility to keep children or young people safe and to take appropriate action whenever they hear, observe or are told information that could impact on their welfare and safety.

Child protection is the statutory threshold for intervention in family life whereby a child or young person is suffering or at risk of significant harm. As an organisation Tor School has a number of statutory responsibilities that must be fulfilled which are set out in legislation and statutory guidance.

You have been issued with Part 1 of **Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2023 and Annex A )** and you will have been asked to read the document ahead of today’s induction. Have you had an opportunity to do so? Do you have any questions?

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# What Safeguarding means for children or young people at Tor School

**All staff should** **reassure victims of abuse that they are being taken seriously and will be supported. Children and young people should never be made to feel ashamed or that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment.**

At Tor School we expect our staff to exercise high standards of behaviour and provide high quality professional support to our children. It is therefore important that we all understand that the nature of our work and the responsibilities related to it, which places us in unique position of trust. During the course of your induction you will have the opportunity to access a range of training that will provide you with the knowledge and skills you need to do your job. In addition, you will be required to read a number of different policies and procedures that will provide you with contextual information and guidance.

All staff, irrespective of their role in the organisation, have a responsibly to ensure that illegal, unsafe, unprofessional or irresponsible behaviour exhibited by staff is challenged and reported. It is always difficult to raise concerns about a colleagues’ behaviour, but you must discuss any concerns with the headteacher.

If you do not feel you can raise concerns within the organisation then you can access the NSPCC Whistleblowing helpline on 0800 028 0285 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. or email [help@nspcc.org.uk](mailto:help@nspcc.org.uk)

You must familiarise yourself with the following polices which are available on the Safeguarding Notice Board (Staff Room) and on the School Website:

1. **Guidance on safer working practice for those working with children and young people in education settings (April 2020)** Tor School has adopted this as our staff code of conduct which is available on the school website.
2. [**What to do if you’re worried a child is being abused (DfE March 2015**](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419604/What_to_do_if_you_re_worried_a_child_is_being_abused.pdf)**)** advice for practitioners
3. **Tor School Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy and Procedures** can be accessed on the school website.
4. Tor School **Behaviour policy**
5. **Children Missing Education procedures** – Tor school follows Somerset Education Safeguarding Service [CME Schools Process Map](https://www.supportservicesforeducation.co.uk/Page/11630)

# 

# Voice and influence

When working with children and young people communication is crucial, especially in relation to safeguarding. Communication is a two-way process and doesn’t just relate to a child’s ability to communicate via speech therefore, we need to approach communication in its broadest terms, considering body language, gestures, behaviour and presentation. We must also support our children to make positive choices.

# 

# Action to be taken if you have a concern about the welfare of a pupil or the conduction/actions of a member of staff or visitor to Tor School

You should discuss your concerns, observations or any information that may impact on the welfare of a child with a designated or deputy safeguarding lead. If it is relation to a member of staff you must speak to the headteacher, or if it relates to the headteacher the Chair of the Management Committee. Low level concerns should also be referred to the headteacher (or if it relates to the headteacher the Chair of the Management Committee). The flowchart overleaf has been developed to offer you guidance on what you should do. It is **not intended to cover all eventualities, but it aims to provide a framework for action.**

What is important is that you take action and raise your concerns, the designated or deputy safeguarding lead may hold other relevant information, but your information may be new and important - the final part of the information jigsaw.

Updated September 2023

# Appendix B

**If you have any concerns about the conduct of a colleague or staff member, including low level concerns, you are obliged to report them appropriately. In the first instance report concerns to the headteacher.** If it relates to the headteacher report to the Chair of the Management Committee, Brian Walton [BAWalton@brooksideacademy.co.uk](mailto:BAWalton@brooksideacademy.co.uk) [01458 443340](https://www.google.com/search?q=brookside+academy+street&rlz=1C1GGRV_enGB785GB785&oq=brookside+academy&aqs=chrome.0.0j46j0l3j46j0.3214j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8).

You can also contact the Local Area Designated Officer on 0300 123 2224. You will be able to hold an advisory conversation in order to clarify the best course of action, given the concerns that you have.

You can also seek support and advice from the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC), as outlined below:



Contact the Whistleblowing Advice Line if:

* your or another organisation doesn’t have clear safeguarding procedures to follow
* concerns aren’t dealt with properly or may be covered up
* a concern that was raised hasn’t been acted upon
* you are worried that repercussions are likely to arise if you raise a concern.

# Appendix C

Reassure victims of abuse that they are being taken seriously and will be supported. Children and young people should never be made to feel ashamed or that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment.

Updated July 2020

**General Information and Advice**

**Action to be taken where there are concerns about the welfare of a child or young person   
or the conduct/actions of Staff or Visitors**

Always maintain an attitude of ‘**it could happen here’**

Always act in the best interests of the child or young person. The welfare of the child is paramount**.**

**Be alert to the signs of abuse and neglect. Supporting documents include:**

Tor School Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy & Procedures Part One: Keeping Children Safe in Education

What to do if You’re Worried a Child is Being Abused: Advice for Practitioners Working Together to Safeguard Children

**If, a child or young person is in immediate danger or is at risk of significant harm**

Anyone can make a referral to Children’s Social Care and/or the Police. The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should be informed if a referral has been made).

**Children’s Social Care: 0300 123 2224 Emergency Duty Team: 0300 123 2327 CALL 999 IN AN EMERGENCY**

If you have a concern relating to dangerous or illegal activity or any wrongdoing within the organisation and you do not feel you can raise a concern directly you can contact the **NSPCC** Whistleblowing helpline 0800 028 0285

**How to report child welfare or child protection concerns at Tor School**

**Safeguarding/Child Protection Concerns**

The DSL will consider what information is already known consider indicators of risk and following multi-agency guidelines take appropriate action

**Child Welfare**

Discuss your concerns with

the Designated/Deputy Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

**You must act to safeguard**

**Concerns relating to the conduct or actions of a staff member (including low level concerns)**

Raise concern with the Headteacher. If concerns relate to Headteacher the Chair of the Management Committee must be notified. All allegations will be investigated following statutory guidance and SSCP procedures by the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

**Appendix D** **Low Level Concern Form**

**Allegations/concerns that do not meet the harms threshold – ‘low level concerns’**

A low-level concern is any concern that an adult has acted in a way that:

* is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work
* does not meet the allegations threshold or is not considered serious enough to refer to the local authority designated officer (LADO).

Low-level concerns about a member of staff should be referred to the headteacher, or in the case of the headteacher, to chair of the management committee (See Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, pages 20,21 & 29) within 24 hours of becoming aware. A concise record is required, including brief context in which the low level concern arose, plus details which are chronological, precise and as accurate as possible, of any such concern and /or relevant incident[s]. The form should be signed, times and dated.

**Details of CONCERN :**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Name of staff member concern relates to:** | |
| Date first became aware of concern:  Time first became aware of concern: | |
| **Details of concern:** | |
| **Reported by :** | **Time and Date :** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Received by :**  **At [time] : Date :** | |
| **WAS THE STAFF MEMBER SPOKEN TO? [Good practice will require a response].**  **NO  - Give a brief but valid reason/explanation for not;** | |
| **YES  - Please complete detail below - STAFF MEMBER’S RESPONSE TO CONCERN :**  **ACTION TAKEN :**  Was advice/guidance sought from the LADO and or Human Resources? Yes :  No :  Was advice/guidance sought from Human Resources? Yes :  No :  **OUTCOME:** | |
| **Signed :** | **Dated :** |

# Details of the Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy/Deputies

**Key Safeguarding staff**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Designation** | **Contact details** |
| **Matt Clinkard** | **DSL**  **Designated Teacher for CLA**  **Online Safety Lead** | [**matthew.clinkard@torschool.org**](mailto:mclinkard1@educ.somerset.gov.uk)  **07496 354067** |
| **Matt Hill** | **Headteacher**  **DDSL**  **CE Lead** | [**matthew.hill@torschool.org**](mailto:matthew.hill@torschool.org)  **01458 258340** |
| **Emma Hill** | **DDSL**  **Mental Health Lead** | [**emma.hill@torschool.org**](mailto:emma.hill@torschool.org)  **01458 258340** |
| **Brian Walton** | **Chair of Management Committee** | [**BAWalton@brooksideacademy.co.uk**](mailto:BAWalton@brooksideacademy.co.uk)  [**01458 443340**](https://www.google.com/search?q=brookside+academy+street&rlz=1C1GGRV_enGB785GB785&oq=brookside+academy&aqs=chrome.0.0j46j0l3j46j0.3214j0j15&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8) |
| **Dan Palmer** | **Nominated Safeguarding Governor** | [**info@reachyouth.co.uk**](mailto:info@reachyouth.co.uk)  **07966 281959** |
| **Anthony Goble**  **Stacey Davis** | **LADO** | **03001 232224** |